(a) Whether it is fact that Central Excise Department located at Piramal Chambers in Mumbai are paying exhorbitant rents;

(b) If so, the reasons for paying more than prevailing market rents; and

(c) The action proposed to be taken against those involved in such unfair deals?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI V. DHANANJAY KUMAR): (a) to (c) The Central Excise Department has been paying rent for its offices located at Piramal Chambers in Mumbai in accordance with the procedure laid down by the Government of India for this purpose.

However, as the rent reasonability certificate issued by the CPWD during the last revision of rent (later withdrawn) has been reported to be based on factually incorrect information, the matter is being enquired into by the C.B.I. The outcome of the enquiry is awaited. Further action will be taken after the findings of the enquiry are known.

Amendment to Income Tax Act for speedy recovery of dues

1788. SHRI R. S. GAVAI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) Whether the Government propose to amend Income Tax Act to speed up recovery of tax arrears;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is fact about Rs. 40,000 crores is due for recovery in the form of direct taxes; and

(d) if so, the steps proposed to be taken by the Government for recovery of dues?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI V. DHANANJAY KUMAR): (a) and (b) No Sir, at present there is no proposal to bring forward amendment in the Income Tax Act to speed up recovery of tax arrears. However, certain suggestions received in this regard are being examined.

(c) Yes Sir. the provisional figures of the total outstanding arrear demand of Corporation Tax and Income Tax as on 31.3.2000 is Rs. 53136.58 crores.

(d) Income Tax Act prescribes a statutory procedure for collection and recovery of taxes. The recovery of the outstanding tax is a continuous process.

The process starts after the demand falls due after 30 days of the service of the demand Notice. Thereafter, action is taken by Assesssing Officer in respect of unstayed demand by attaching bank accounts, charging interest, levying penalty etc. In difficult cases, matter is referred to Tax Recovery Officer who takes various coercive measures as per the Act like attachment and sale of defaulter's movable and immovable properties, arrest of defaulter and his detention in prision, appointment of Receiver for the management of the defaulter's movable and immovable properties. The recovery action taken by the Assessing Officer and TROs is closely monitored by the higher income tax authorities.

Dossier cases having outstanding demand of Rs. 10 lakhs and above are monitored by higher authorities on a regular periodic basis and necessary instructions are issued for taking various coercive measures for effecting the recovery of demand.

Foreign Investment in the Country

1789. SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) what has been the total amount of foreign investment in the country till date from 1991—2000;

(b) what has been its breakup, State-wise;

(c) what has been the reasons for poor investment in some of the Eastern States notably Bihar;

(d) what are the subjects (areas) in which foreign investments have been made;

(e) what particular steps State Governments are required to take to attract foreign investment in large measure to speed up industrial development; and

(f) what has been the extent of employment generation in the wake of foreign investment?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL): (a) During the period from August' 91 to June' 2000, FDI inflow has been Rs. 79,175.42 crore.

(b) The information is not centrally maintained.

(c) The choice of location of projects depends on the commercial judgement of investors. The location of projects involving Foreign Direct Investment (FDI)